

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 059310

71

ORIGIN ARA-10

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AF/EX: RTSALAZAR (PHONE)

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NEA/EX: JCONNOLLY (PHONE)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS PRIORITY

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FOLLOWING IS REPEAT GUATEMALA 1768, SENT SECSTATE 1 MARCH 76:

QUOTE UNCLAS GUATEMALA 1768

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SWEL, GT

SUBJECT: GUATEMALAN EARTHQUAKE - MISSION EMPLOYEES' RELIEF

1. U.S. MISSION GUATEMALA HAS RECEIVED A NUMBER OF INQUIRIES FROM MISSION WORLD-WIDE CONCERNING POSSIBLE EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR ITS GUATEMALAN EMPLOYEES WHO SUFFERED FROM THE RECENT DISASTROUS EARTHQUAKE. U.S. MISSION WISHES TO THANK THOSE POSTS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ALREADY HAVE GENEROUSLY GIVEN FOR THIS PURPOSE. MISSION INITIALLY CONCENTRATED ITS OWN RESOURCES AND THOSE RECEIVED FROM OTHERS ON PROVIDING FOOD, WATER, CLOTHING, TENTS AND OTHER TYPES

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PAGE 02 STATE 059310

OF IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY GUATEMALAN EMPLOYEES.

HOWEVER, THE IMMEDIATE CRISIS HAS NOW BEEN MET AND OUR RESOURCES ARE INSUFFICIENT TO THE FAR MORE COSTLY TASK OF ASSISTING IN PROVIDING PERMANENT SHELTER FOR THE GUATEMALAN EMPLOYEES WHO LOST THEIR HOMES. SWIFT ACTION IS NECESSARY BECAUSE THE RAINY SEASON WILL START IN ABOUT TWO AND ONE-HALF MONTHS. MISSION ESTABLISHING AN ACCOUNT TO PROVIDE FOR LOANS AND GRANTS FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF GUATEMALAN EMPLOYEES' HOUSING, PARTICULARLY THOSE ON THE LOWER PAY SCALES WHO HAVE LITTLE OR NO ACCESS TO OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND WHO WITH THEIR FAMILIES WILL SUFFER THE MOST WHEN THE HEAVY RAINS ARRIVE. AN ESTIMATED 18 PERCENT OF MISSION AND ROCAP GUATEMALAN PERSONNEL HAD THEIR HOUSES COMPLETELY DEMOLISHED; ANOTHER 35 PERCENT HAD THEIR HOUSES SEVERELY DAMAGED BY THE EARTHQUAKE. THE MISSION REALIZES IT CANNOT RECONSTRUCT EVERY HOUSE BUT WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE IN PUTTING ROOFS OVER THE HEADS OF THE NEEDIEST BEFORE THE RAINY SEASON.

2. SUGGEST ABOVE TEXT ALSO BE USED FOR FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL, FOREIGN SERVICE NEWSLETTER, AID NEWSLETTER "FRONTLINES", AND ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE PUBLICATIONS. MELOY UNQUOTE. INGERSOLL

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